

December 2012



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Tulare County FSA Updates

Tulare County
FSA Office
3530 W. Orchard Ct
Visalia, CA 93277

Phone: 559-734-8732 Ext. 2
Fax: 559-732-2805

Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

County Committee
Chairperson
Charlie Pitigliano, Jr.

Vice-Chairperson
Mark Heuer

Member
Craig Ainley

Advisor
Alex Garcia,

County Office Staff
Theresa Barajas, PT
Slade Childers, FL PT
Ruth Ford, COT
Becky Garcia, CPT
Pat Miller, FLO
Yvonne Newman, PT
Danielle Parreira, PT
Kelly Solis, PT
Lorraine Wilson, PT

Farm Loan Manager
Tom Roberts

County Executive Director

Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period

USDA has announced that Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades can file claims between Sept. 24, 2012 and March 25, 2013.

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied their applications for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000.

As announced in February 2011, the voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

USDA will continue reaching out to potential Hispanic and female claimants, around the country to get the word out to individuals who may be eligible for this program so they have the opportunity to participate.

Claimants can obtain a claims package in the mail by calling 1-888-509-4429 or visiting the website www.farmerclaims.gov . and the claims package will be mailed to claimants. Public meetings are also being held in many areas to share further information. Contact your nearest FSA office to get a schedule in your area.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Claims Period: Sept. 24, 2012 - March 25, 2013.

An independent third-party administrator will administer the claims process and adjudicate the claims. There are no filing fees to participate and a lawyer is not required to participate in the claims process, but claimants may retain an attorney or other legal services provider. The USDA news release provides more background:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2012/09/0309.xml&contentonly=true>



2011 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program Applications

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) will continue to accept SURE applications for 2011 crop losses through June 7, 2013. The SURE Program provides payments to producers when crop revenues are less than the crop guarantee. The SURE Program payment is equal to 60 percent of the difference between the SURE guarantee and total farm revenue.



To determine the guarantee and revenue for the SURE Program, all crops on all farms for a producer are included in the calculation. Payments under the SURE Program are limited to \$100,000.

To be eligible for the 2011 SURE Program, producers must have crop insurance on all insurable crops. For crops that are not covered by crop insurance such as pumpkins, cucumbers and others, producers must have purchased Non Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage through FSA. The Crop Insurance and NAP purchase requirement is waived for crops that are not economically significant to the farming operation. In addition, producers must have at least one crop with a 10 percent production loss in the Secretarial Disaster Designation for the county or a 50% loss in actual crop production.



For more information concerning the 2011 SURE program or other Farm Service Agency programs, contact our office or visit the Farm Service Agency website at www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/.

IRS 1099 Changes

Calendar year 2012 has brought changes to the way FSA reports farm program payments to the producer and to the IRS.

In past years, IRS Form 1099-G would be issued to show all program payments received from the Farm Service Agency, regardless of the amount.

Starting with calendar year 2012, producers whose total reportable payments from FSA are less than \$600 will not receive IRS Form 1099-G. Also, producers who receive payments from more than one county will only receive one Form 1099-G if the total of all payments from all counties is \$600 or more.

The same changes will apply to those who normally receive IRS Form 1099-MISC from FSA.

2013 Ag Census Coming

USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service will mail the 2013 Census of Agriculture in mid-December. If you receive an Ag Census form, please complete and return it by the February 4, 2013 deadline.

Producers can easily and securely respond online after receiving their census form at www.agcensus.usda.gov. For questions or help completing the form producers can contact NASS at (888) 424-7828.

The Census of Agriculture is conducted only once every five years to accurately collect demographic information about farmers, ranchers and their operations. USDA agencies and many other institutions and organizations use the results of the Census for education, research, planning and policy-making decisions within government, as well as business, industry and academia. The use of this valuable information impacts **everyone** across our nation.

Farm Loan Programs

Guaranteed Loan Limit

The Farm Service Agency has announced that as of Oct. 1, 2012 the loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program is \$1,302,000. This limit is adjusted annually based on data compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The FSA overall lending ceiling increases every year according to an inflation index. The maximum combined guaranteed and direct farm loan indebtedness is now \$1,602,000.

As a reminder, the one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans is 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan. Producers can contact the office and speak to a farm loan specialist with questions about farm loans.

Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of socially disadvantaged groups.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is a member of a group that has been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice without regard to his or her individual qualities.

Dates to Remember

Dec. 15	Acreage report due for Perennials, forage and potato plants
Dec. 15	NAP 2013 application closing for fruit/nut/tree crops, asparagus, artichokes, herbs
Dec. 25	Christmas Day, FSA office closed
Jan. 1, 2013	NAP 2014 application closing for Avocado
March 1, 2013	NAP 2013 closing for all annual crops
March 25, 2013	Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period ends
June 7, 2013	SURE applications due

Selected Interest Rates for December 2012

Farm Operating - Direct	1.125%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.125%
Farm Ownership Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency	2.125%

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9450, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay).